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SUBJECT: DAMAN Pre-inspection Program Terminated; Jordan Institutes
Procedures for Low-Risk Imports

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Sensitive but unclassified. Not for internet distribution.

¶1. (U) Director General of the Jordan Institution for Standards and Metrology (JISM) Dr. Yaseen Khayaat confirmed to EconOffs September 30 that the long-running DAMAN pre-inspection program expired on schedule on September 1, 2007 (reftel). Khayaat added that with the end of the program, Bureau Veritas (BV), the DAMAN contractor, was in the process of turning over all of its files to JISM, and had transferred operational ownership of BV's vehicle inspection station in Zarka to Jordan's Public Security Department. He reported that the DAMAN program generated useful information on importers and exporters which JISM has used to identify low-risk companies and facilitate the entry into Jordan of their goods, mainly products originating from the U.S., Canada, Japan, and some European countries.

¶2. (U) Khayaat commented that Jordan continues to implement procedures which allow immediate release of imported goods from low-risk countries by Jordanian companies that have demonstrated compliance with all conformity assessment regulations. Such shipments are subject to random inspections based on risk criteria. In cases of suspect products, JISM sends samples for testing to either its two labs, or labs run by the Royal Scientific Society.

¶3. (U) Draft amendments to JISM's Standards and Metrology Law, still pending parliamentary approval, would give JISM the authority to implement a post-inspection market surveillance program. Under such a system, JISM would be able to enter any shop, company, or manufacturer, and take samples of suspected products for testing. Khayaat said he already has a core market surveillance team of 10 individuals, trained under the recently concluded German Twinning program. Noting bureaucratic difficulties in hiring additional civil servants, he said that he still needs at least 50 inspectors and more vehicles to be able to conduct market surveillance effectively throughout Jordan.

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT. Both in Amman and Washington, U.S. officials have consistently stressed to GOJ representatives that the DAMAN pre-inspection regime represented a non-tariff barrier to trade and a hindrance to commercial activities between the two countries. Post incorporated the elimination of DAMAN into policy reform conditions placed on the cash transfer portion of ESF for Jordan in recent years. The demise of the DAMAN program, therefore, is welcome news and evidence that the GOJ is getting more serious about eliminating barriers to trade. Khayaat acknowledged the high quality of the majority of U.S. goods imported to Jordan, stressing that U.S. products, if examined, generally receive a simple visual inspection. By facilitating the import of U.S. goods, and now emphasizing international instead of European standards, the GOJ has

created more attractive conditions to lure U.S. companies to the market.

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